

BOOK REVIEWS

EPIDERMAL WOUND HEALING, Edited by H. I. Maibach and David T. Rovee. Year Book Medical Publishers, Inc., Chicago, 1972. (372 pp.)

The maintenance of the interface between an organism and its environment is essential for life. The epidermis is this interface in man, and the proceedings of the Conference on Epidermal Wound Healing, edited by Maibach and Rovee, present a varied view of the biologic mechanisms involved in establishing and maintaining the epidermis.

I. C. MacKenzie lucidly describes the factors causing cells to assume their individual shapes and arrangements in the epidermis; R. E. Baier discusses elegant nondestructive methods for analyzing wound exudates which should be usable for quantitating problems in cutaneous biology other than wound healing.

The studies of G. D. Winter, D. J. Rovee et al, J. W. Bothwell, and I. A. Silver are all concerned with the importance of environmental factors such as occlusion, humidity, and oxygen tension on wound healing and are well documented. The role of hemostatic agents, antibiotics, and adhesives in wound healing are among several other topics discussed.

The book is essential reading for investigators in epidermal biology and required reading for anyone contemplating a clinical study of the effect of a therapeutic agent on wound healing. Trainees in clinical dermatology will benefit from stimulating, well-referenced discussions of the theoretical basis behind some principles of topical therapy.

The book is well printed with large type, a good index, and generally useful illustrative material. The editors have done a fine job preparing the proceedings of the conference for rapid publication.

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THE NAILS IN DISEASE (2ND EDITION), Peter D. Samman. Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1972. (177 pp.)

The second edition of *Nails in Disease* is what it purports to be, a practical guide to nail disorders. The author has collected a comprehensive spectrum of nail changes and has classified and illustrated them well. The references are accurate and more extensive than in the previous edition and are now located at the end of each chapter for the reader's convenience. This is a book for clinicians and trainees which emphasizes disease recognition rather than being an all inclusive textbook of nails. For this reason it is of less value to the investigative dermatologist. The weakest part of the book is the basic science introduction where there are several statements of

questionable accuracy, as well as typographical and grammatical errors (i.e., on page 15 it is stated that the nail plate is deprived of nuclei and that keratin fibrils are intercellular). One would like to see more evidence for the statement that defective peripheral circulation is one of the major causes of nail deformities (p. 11) since the reference cited in the text including the arteriographic studies conclude that a cause and effect relationship has not been proven. It is stated on page 143 that "pigment streaks in the nails in coloured people are much more common and are due to minor trauma." No reference or basis for this conclusion is made.

Additions to the previous edition include Darier's disease, acrodermatitis enteropathica, and adenoma sebaceum as well as more thorough discussions of congenital and hereditary disorders. There are also more illustrations, some of them in color.

This is a very readable, well organized text which should be of great help to the practicing dermatologist.

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DERMAL PATHOLOGY, Edited by J. H. Graham, W. C. Johnson, and E. B. Helwig. Harper and Row, New York, 1972. (840 pages, \$45.00)

The published works of the three editors, which are familiar to every practicing dermatopathologist, form a cornerstone for the neophyte searching for some expertise in dermatopathology. With few exceptions this book is a compilation of their scientific work. The expressed purpose of the editors was to provide a highly illustrated textbook (1,155 illustrations with 77 in color) for use by a physician in "preparing for specialty boards to learn or to improve his ability to diagnose skin lesions." Admittedly the presentation is not all inclusive but does include data that are not found in existing textbooks.

The histologic descriptions are detailed, accurate, and readable. The histochemical findings that are included in most of the chapters are not readily available in other textbooks. With few exceptions the illustrations are of high quality and are accompanied by excellent captions. It is possible to use portions of this book as an atlas and obtain a great deal of useful information.

The level at which material is presented is somewhat variable from one chapter to the next. This is in part explained by the fact that there were seventeen contributors. Some of the chapters which are credited to a single contributor are simply modifications of previous publications